



Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS

MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF
PERMITTING SERVICES
JULY/AUGUST 2005



Robert C. Hubbard
Director

HELP US TO HELP YOU WITH BUILDING PERMIT INSPECTIONS

DPS offers THREE WAYS TO SCHEDULE COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMIT INSPECTIONS. **YOU** choose the method that works best for you.

1. Schedule inspections on-line.

Available 5 am—11 pm, you may schedule inspections at your convenience!

- Go to <http://permittingservices.montgomerycountymd.gov>
- Under *Option 1*, enter the type of permit and the permit number (This will bring you to a permit summary page where you will find details about your permit.)
- Select *Schedule Inspection*.
- Select an inspection that you want to schedule.
- Select a date in the next seven business days (Cut-off time for next-day appointments is **12:00 noon**.)
- Enter the Contact ID printed on your permit.
- Specify an A.M. or P.M. preference (Times cannot be guaranteed, and specific appointments cannot be made.)
- Indicate the location of your plans for the inspector's access.
- Click *Schedule*. Make a note of your inspection-confirmation number; you will need this number should you need information about your inspection or need to cancel the inspection.

2. Schedule inspections by phone.

DPS has an interactive voice response ("IVR") system. The IVR is available 5am—11 pm and allows you to schedule an inspection, cancel an inspection, and get inspection results. In addition, you may check on the status of your application or have forms faxed to you.

- Call 240-777-6210.
- You should know your:
 - Application/Permit number
 - Application/Permit type
 - Inspection type
 - Desired inspection date (cut-off time for next-day appointments is **12:00 noon**)
 - Follow the prompts.

The system will allow you to schedule an inspection up to seven workdays in advance.

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3. Schedule inspections with a Permit Technician

During business hours (7:30 am – 4:00 pm, Monday-Friday), you may speak with a Permit Technician (“PT”) who can assist you with scheduling your inspection or answer any questions that you may have about your permit or the inspection process. Call 240-777-6210 and press *0 to be transferred to a PT. Because of the volume of calls that we receive, you may experience a wait time. Mornings are a peak time for calls, and the wait time may be significant.

Whichever method you use to schedule your inspections, remember that multiple final inspections on the same project must be scheduled together. For instance, if you have building, electrical and mechanical permits on the single-family home that you are building, you **MUST** schedule finals for each of those permits for the same time.

4. Cancel an Inspection

On the DPS Website:

- Enter the inspection-confirmation number that was assigned when the inspection request was submitted via the DPS website.
- If you have misplaced or forgotten the inspection-confirmation number, click on the "Inspections" button in the black menu bar to view the inspections that have been done and any that are awaiting inspection.
- Find the inspection type that you requested (e.g., “Close-In”) that matches the Scheduled Date for the requested inspection. The inspection-confirmation number is the seven-character number in parentheses.
- To cancel the inspection request,

enter the inspection-confirmation number and click "Cancel Inspection." You will receive an acknowledgement when the inspection request has been cancelled.

Using the IVR phone system:

- You need your inspection-confirmation number.
- Dial the DPS IVR at 240-777-6210.
- Press “2.”
- Follow the prompts.

With PT Assistance, Call (7:30 am – 4:00 pm, Monday-Friday), :
Reschedule/Cancel your inspection.

5. To Get Inspection Results

On the DPS Website:

Click on the "Inspections" button in the black menu bar to display the inspections that are scheduled/that have been performed for the specified permit. The inspection description, the status, location comments, and the scheduled and completed dates are shown.

Using the IVR phone system:

- You need your inspection-confirmation number.
- Press 3.
- Dial the DPS IVR at 240-777-6210.
- Follow the prompts.

With PT Assistance (7:30 am – 4:00 pm, Monday-Friday):

You can talk with a PT who can provide inspection information or put you in touch with the DPS inspector for your project.

We believe that DPS provides its customers with considerable flexibility in the ways that

they can schedule or track inspections. Of course, we're open to suggestions. Please call (240 777-6267) or email (gail.lucas@montgomerycountymd.gov) Permitting Services Manager Gail Lucas if you have ideas for improving our processes.



AS I SEE IT ...
by DPS DIRECTOR
ROBERT HUBBARD

Clarksburg

Earlier this month, I sat through a nine-hour hearing at the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission ("MNCPPC") convened to consider the matter of site-plan violations in the Clarksburg Town Center. I have to admit to being dismayed at the exculpatory attitude of the developers and their land-use attorneys with respect to height and setback issues.

Their contention that the issuance of building permits sanctified their having constructed buildings illegally begs the ques-

tion as to what prompted them to submit drawings to the County that exceed agreed-upon standards.

I continually heard from the developer, the builders, and their attorneys that the issuance of building permits by DPS established that the buildings were in compliance because the Montgomery County Code ("the Code"), Section 8- 25 (a), states, in part, that "the Director must examine or cause to be examined each application for a building permit ... If the proposed work conforms to all requirements.... the Director must issue a permit for the work as soon as practicable." In accordance with standard practice, that "examination" occurred when the permit applications were referred to MNCPPC for certification that the proposed buildings were in compliance with the project plan, the site plan and the site-plan enforcement agreement. DPS approved the applications after receiving the required certification by MNCPPC.

However, in propounding his analysis, the developer overlooked Section 8-26(g) of the Code that prescribes, "The issuance of a permit by the Department for the building or structure does not affect an otherwise applicable zoning regulation." This means that he had a responsibility to abide by the Zoning Ordinance and the conditions of the site plan that limited building heights and setbacks. Needless to say, all permit applicants should be careful to design and construct their buildings in compliance with County standards to avoid dire consequences both before and after permit issuance.

It is regrettable, for all parties involved, that the permits for the Clarksburg Town Center were issued without proper determi-

nation of height and setback. DPS and MNCPPC are taking steps to insure that thorough reviews are performed prior to permit issuance. Of course, with greater scrutiny will come longer processing times and higher costs, some of which the Clarksburg developers could have avoided had they scrupulously followed the agreements to which they affixed their signatures.

Building Height

On a separate but not unrelated topic, the Maryland National Capital Building Industry Association has asked for a clarification on the methodology for calculating building height. The County Council has deferred action on amendments that address this issue. Therefore, the methodology remains unchanged, as do relevant policies and interpretations in DPS. Please contact Casework Management Division Chief Reggie Jetter or Zoning Permitting Services Manager Susan Scala-Demby, if you have questions about this issue.



BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

THERMAL SWITCHES RECALLED

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has announced the recall of approximately 113,500, "Snap Action" Thermal Switches manufactured by Honeywell Sensing and Controls and sold to authorized distributors and manufacturers nationwide from July 2004 through August 2004 for between \$1 and \$2.

If these switches were to be used in fire or HVAC dampers and heat detectors, they could fail to operate and cause the damper not to close or the heat detector alarm not to activate if there were a fire.

The switches were sold under the model numbers 2450A, 2455RA and 2455RM. The model number and date code is stamped on the sensing surface or end cap of the switch. The codes appearing on the switches being recalled are 2455RA and 2450A-Z0412, Z0413, Z0414, Z0415, Z0416, Z0417, Z0418, Z0419, Z0420, Z0421, Z0427, Z0429, Z0430, Z0431, Z0432, Z0434, Z0435, Z0436 and Z0437; and 2455RM-Z0421, Z0427, Z0429, Z0430, Z0431, Z0432, Z0434, Z0435, Z0436 and Z0437.

The manufacturer will provide free replacement switches. For more information, call Honeywell Sensing and Controls at 1-800-537-6945 between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Central Time, Monday through Friday.



FOUNDATION/PARGING OR BACK-FILL INSPECTIONS REQUIREMENT

Section R404.1.7 of the International Residential Code states that “Backfill shall not be placed against the wall until the wall has sufficient strength and has been anchored to the floor above, or has been sufficiently braced to prevent damage by the backfill. Exception: Such bracing is not required for walls supporting less than 4 feet of unbalanced backfill.”

Please be advised that DPS inspectors will not approve these inspections unless foundation walls are capable of resisting lateral-earth pressure. This means that foundation walls must have sufficient strength and be supported at the top and bottom by the floor-framing system anchored to the foundation wall and the basement slab, respectively, or be adequately braced to decrease the chance of damage to the foundation by the backfill.

Any questions about these requirements may be directed to Permitting Services Managers George Muste (240 777-6232) or Hemal Mustafa (240 777-6226).

CASEWORK MANAGEMENT

WHY DO YOU NEED A ZONING REVIEW?

Zoning is an important review in the building permit process. The Zoning Ordinance

determines the location of a building on your lot, the height, and number of stories, the percentage of lot coverage and the number of dwelling units allowed per acre. During the zoning review your plans will be checked to determine if the construction meets these minimum development standards required for the zoning classification of the property.

A Permitting Services Specialist in the Zoning Unit of the Division of Casework Management will carefully review your plans to assure compliance with the Zoning Ordinance. This review includes the determination of the established building line, which is applicable in certain zones. The site plan is also reviewed for front, rear and side setbacks. There is a review of the building height and number of stories by examining the site plan which includes topographic information, contours and elevations. The information provided on your plans is used to determine if the lowest level of the dwelling will be considered a basement or a cellar, which determines the number of stories. The site plan and architectural plans are examined for calculating the percentage of lot area that is covered by the buildings.

If during the plan review process discrepancies are identified or some of the information needed to complete the review is missing, the Zoning Specialist will provide you with a list of corrections. Please understand making these corrections will probably delay the review and subsequent approval of your permit. We appreciate your cooperation in providing us with the highest possible quality of plans with your building permit application.



IMPACT-TAX RATES CHANGE EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2005

As reported in our last issue, Impact Taxes changed July 1, 2005. The tables below provide specific information about the new tax rates.

Pursuant to Chapter 52, Sections 57(e) and 90(e) of the Montgomery County Code (Development Impact Tax for Transportation Improvements and Development Impact Tax for Public School Improvements, respectively) the Director of Finance has adjusted the tax rates set under Sections 57(a) and 90(a). As prescribed by law, the Director must adjust the previous rates by the change in the average annual rates in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI) for the Washington-Baltimore Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area for the two most recent years. Based on the change in the CPI over the past two years, the existing rates were increased by a rate of 5.8 percent and to the nearest 5 cents for rates per square foot of gross floor area (GFA) or one dollar for rates per dwelling unit. Table 1 provides the new rates for the Development Impact Tax for Transportation Improvements, while Table 2 provides the new rates for the Development Impact Tax for Public School Improvements.

TABLE 1
Development Impact Tax for Transportation Improvements Tax Rates

	Existing Rates	New Rates
Residential		
<u>General</u>		
Single-family detached (per dwelling unit)	\$5,500	\$5,819
Single-family attached (per dwelling unit)	\$4,500	\$4,761
Multi-family residential (except high-rise) (per dwelling unit)	\$3,500	\$3,703
High-rise residential (per dwelling unit)	\$2,500	\$2,645
Multi-family senior residential (per dwelling unit)	\$1,000	\$1,058
<u>Metro Station</u>		
Single-family detached	\$2,750	\$2,910
Single-family attached	\$2,250	\$2,381
Multi-family residential (except high-rise)	\$1,750	\$1,852
High-rise residential	\$1,250	\$1,323
Multi-family senior residential	\$500	\$529
<u>Clarksburg</u>		
Single-family detached	\$8,250	\$8,729
Single-family attached	\$6,750	\$7,142
Multi-family residential (except high-rise)	\$5,250	\$5,555
High-rise residential	\$3,750	\$3,968
Multi-family senior residential	\$1,500	\$1,587
Non-Residential (per square foot GFA)		
<u>General</u>		
Office	\$5.00	\$5.30

Industrial	\$2.50	\$2.65
Bioscience facility	\$0.00	\$0.00
Retail	\$4.50	\$4.75
Place of worship	\$0.30	\$0.30
Private elementary and secondary school	\$0.40	\$0.40
Hospital	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other non-residential	\$2.50	\$2.65
<u>Metro Station</u>		
Office	\$2.50	\$2.65
Industrial	\$1.25	\$1.30
Bioscience facility	\$0.00	\$0.00
Retail	\$2.25	\$2.40
Place of worship	\$0.15	\$0.15
Private elementary and secondary school	\$0.20	\$0.20
Hospital	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other non-residential	\$1.25	\$1.30
<u>Clarksburg</u>		
Office	\$6.00	\$6.35
Industrial	\$3.00	\$3.15
Bioscience facility	\$0.00	\$0.00
Retail	\$5.40	\$5.70
Place of worship	\$0.35	\$0.35
Private elementary and secondary school	\$0.50	\$0.55
Hospital	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other non-residential	\$3.00	\$3.15

TABLE 2
Development Impact Tax for Public School Improvements Tax Rates

	Existing Rates	New Rates
Countywide		
Single-family detached	\$8,000	\$8,464
Single-family attached	\$6,000	\$6,348
Multi-family (except high-rise)	\$4,000	\$4,232
High-rise	\$1,600	\$1,693
Multi-family senior	\$0	\$0

PERMIT TECHNICIAN CASEWORK MANAGEMENT IS IN FULL SWING

One of the benefits of the DPS reorganization has been the concept of casework management of large complex projects by individual Permit Technicians. Having a single point-of-contact within DPS has assisted many applicants to navigate the various applications needed to complete a project.

Individual Permit Technicians are able to work outside of their routine areas to assist applicants with a wide variety of in-house services, such as pre-permit design consultations, code modifications, fee determinations, permit applications, coordination of review comments, permit revisions, inspections, and Use-and-Occupancy approvals. The ultimate goal is for every Permit Technician to be able to take on any complex permitting case and see it through to completion.

Significant cases within the Land Development Team are the Chevy Chase Center managed by Elaine Miller, the Forest Glen Adaptive Reuse Project managed by Laura King, and the County-Wide Clear Channel Bus Stop Project managed by Ed Myers.

Elaine Miller has worked with the Chevy Chase Land Company, Stonebridge Associates, and HOK Architects from the pre-design stage through the current tenant fit-out. Stonebridge Assistant Project Manager Claiborne Williams has stated, “Elaine has assisted us with our needs throughout the permitting process. She finds the correct person or group that we need to coordinate with. She keeps ticklers on her calendar and calls us with reminders when something is needed.” Elaine says that she can’t wait to have lunch at the newly renovated Clyde’s Restaurant and shop in the upscale stores.

She has made several trips to the site to see firsthand how the project is progressing and has learned much about construction and DPS internal processes.

Laura King is the facilitator for the historic Forest Glen Adaptive Reuse Project that includes restoration of some of the more unique structures in Montgomery County. It only took one trip to the site for Laura to fall in love with the many architecturally significant buildings and to appreciate the history of the site, which had been used as a private school for girls, an inn, and the Walter Reed Army Medical Center rehabilitation center for WWII soldiers. Who knew that Montgomery County was home to a castle, a pagoda, a Swiss chalet, and a Bavarian inn? The Forest Glen historic district has a very supportive community of preservationists and neighbors who have waited for the Department of Defense to make the property available for private development. Now that the process is underway, Laura is working on the permitting for the site and looks forward to seeing the development of new in-fill housing and the restoration of the existing structures.

The Clear Channel Bus Shelter Project is a Department of Public Works and Transportation initiative to install nearly 500 new or replacement bus shelters throughout the County. Under notable press attention, the project started with demolition permits for advertising billboards. Ed Myers has worked with DPWT project staff to issue up to three permits for each bus-shelter location. This massive effort included coordination with right-of-way, building, and electrical inspectors and the Clear Channel contractor. Ed has learned much about the building permit process in addition to expanding his ability to process electrical and right-of-way permits. Ed is maintaining an

on-going database of locations under application in order to track the progress of this multi-year project.

Cases are assigned to Permit Technicians based on complexity or applicant need. For example, out-of-town applicants typically require assistance if they have never worked in Montgomery County. Anyone interested in having a case manager assigned to a new project should contact Casework Management Division Chief Reginald Jetter at 240-777-6275.

TEAMWORK PROVES PRODUCTIVE



Pictured here clockwise from the left to right are Casework Management Water Resources team members Permit Technicians Deon Owen, Mary Ann McDonald, Elaine Miller, and Laura Granger as they work together to update the Water Resources web pages. Casework Management staff is responsible for providing the latest fee information on the departmental web pages. This high-performing team worked together to verify the accuracy of new regulations and to document regulatory changes for public display on the DPS web site.

HOW TO GET ZONING INFORMATION

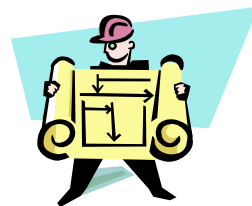
Questions about zoning issues are a constant here in DPS. Given the complexities of the Zoning Ordinance (“the Ordinance”),

such questions can be among the most challenging to which DPS staff respond.

The good news is that there is more than one way for you to obtain zoning information. You can visit the DPS website, <http://permittingservices.montgomerycountymd.gov>, which provides policies and interpretations that elucidate terms/concepts that may not be fully explained in the Ordinance. The website lists links to other organizations that may be of assistance, including the agency to contact for electronic copies of the Ordinance. Also, your concern might be addressed in the *Frequently Asked Questions* section of the website.

If the website does not have the information that you need, you may call DPS at 240 777-6240 and ask to speak to a zoning Permitting Services Specialist. If the specialist is busy answering another call, and you have to leave a message, please be as specific as you can, especially about the address of the property, if your inquiry involves a particular address. The specialist will then research the property before he/she calls you back.

Our information line is staffed Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM until 4:30 PM. We look forward to helping to demystify the arcane world of zoning for you.





IMPORTANT

EFFECTIVE JULY 14, 2005

Effective July 14, 2005, any building application submitted subject to a Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning (MNCPPC) site plan **MUST** include the following language on the building permit site plan submitted for review and **MUST** be signed and sealed by a design professional in the state of Maryland:

The height of this building, as defined by the *Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance*, is ____ feet, per the architectural drawings, dated _____, which complies with Site Plan #____ approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board; the height of this building may be impacted by final grading, but the building should not exceed ____ as permitted by the site plan.

The setbacks for this building, as defined by the *Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance*, are ____ feet front, ____ feet rear, and ____ feet (both sides total of ____ feet min); the setbacks comply with Site Plan # _____ approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board.

Applicants for pending building permits subject to MNCPPC site plan review must **resubmit** building permit site plans with the above information. New applications for building permits **will not be accepted** if the above information is not on the site plan. Please call 240 777-6240 with questions.

NEW FEE FOR “ELECTRICIAN’S LETTER OF GOOD STANDING”

DPS now charges a fee for an “Electrician’s Letter of Good Standing (‘ELGS’).” The ELGS is prepared at the written request of a Montgomery County licensed Master or Journeyman Electrician who wants to corroborate his or her County licensure for another jurisdiction. The fee is \$28.60, which includes a base fee of \$26.00 and a 10% Automation Enhancement Fee of \$2.60.

Aside from confirming licensure, the ELGS provides details about the electrician’s status as a licensee. It cites the date of licensure and states whether the license was conferred by “examination” or “reciprocation.” It lists any outstanding electrical-code violations for which the licensee is responsible that occurred thirty or fewer days prior to the date of the letter. Also, the ELGS include a recommendation as to whether or not the other jurisdiction should issue the electrician a similar license.

Electricians who have practiced their trade for more than one year in Montgomery County may request an ELGS. The requester must sign the letter and provide his or her County license number below his or her signature.

The ELGS fee must be submitted by check or money order made payable to Montgomery County. The written request for an ELGS should be mailed to the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services, 255 Rockville Pike, 2nd Floor, Rockville, Maryland 20850-4153. Questions about the ELGS should be directed to Permitting Services Manager Sandra Kaiser at 240 777-6283.

LAND DEVELOPMENT

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT UPDATE

DPS and the Department of Environmental Protection have been working on standards for the construction of stormwater-management structures. Without proper oversight, some facilities have been constructed using inferior materials and improper construction techniques. DPS hopes to have oversight requirements in place this fall. More information will be available soon on the department’s website.

As a separate issue, state and county stormwater-management standards are designed to address treating runoff at its source instead of at single points of discharge. Therefore, a combination of structural and nonstructural stormwater-management practices is typically a better alternative than a single structure that controls or treats runoff from an entire site. Using a variety of practices with smaller drainage areas more closely replicates natural runoff conditions. Also, this approach more efficiently removes pollutants from runoff.

The Department of Environmental Protection is responsible for maintaining many residential stormwater-management facilities. Maintenance costs are typically much higher for underground facilities than for those on the surface. For this reason, the County prefers surface stormwater-management facilities to underground facilities for new residential construction.



CURB-RAMP UPDATE FOR PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAY

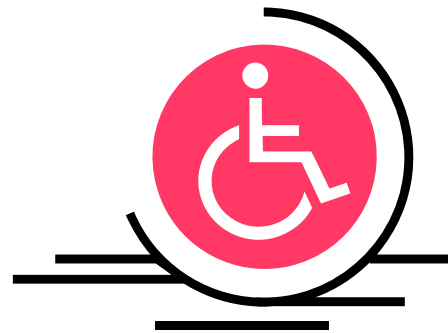
Effective immediately, to bring County permitting projects into conformance with Americans with Disabilities Act requirements and standard practices of the Maryland State Highway Administration and the Montgomery County Department of Public Works and Transportation, detectable warning surfaces must be installed on all curb ramps prior to bond release.

Detectable warnings consist of a twenty-four-inch wide contrasting color panel of raised truncated domes extending the full width of the curb ramp in the direction of travel. Typical applications for both new and retrofit installations involve grinding a one-quarter-inch deep recess in the concrete and applying the panel with epoxy. The County will follow MSHA standards pertaining to these devices.

Also effective immediately, all new plans submitted for permit approval will be reviewed to ensure that a level landing is provided at the top of all curb ramps. The landing must be 60" x 60" (48" acceptable for four-foot-wide sidewalks) and must have a cross slope of no more than two per-

cent. In retrofit situations where the sidewalk is adjacent to the street, a sixty-inch-long landing at street level, but within the sidewalk, must be provided, with a slope no more than two percent to the street.

Questions concerning these requirements should be directed to DPS Permitting Services Specialist Sarah Navid with the Right-of-Way Permitting and Plan Review Section of the Division of Land Development at 240 777-6304.



PORTABLE STORAGE CONTAINERS IN COUNTY RIGHTS-OF-WAY

The use of portable storage containers by homeowners has become increasing popular. These containers are commonly referred to as "POD's." The preferred location for a POD is on a homeowner's driveway or property. However, if a homeowner does not have a driveway, or the placement of a POD on his or her property is not practicable, then the County will consider the temporary placement of a POD within the right-of-way or on a County road, although locating POD's on high-volume or narrow roadways is discouraged for safety reasons.

DPS requires a permit for the placement of a POD within the right-of-way or on a

County road. This permit is very similar to the permit required for the placement of construction dumpsters on roadways. A right-of-way permit for a POD insures that the container will be placed in an acceptable location that does not endanger the traveling public and does not interfere with pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The permit may require the placement of warning devices such as traffic cones or barricades to alert motorists to the presence of the POD.

A traffic-control plan showing any required warning devices may be required for POD's placed on high-volume roadways and within business districts. In some cases, a right-of-way permit might be denied if the POD could create a sight-distance problem or if the roadway were a major roadway with high traffic volumes.

Right-of-way permits for POD's are valid for a maximum of six months. The issuance of a right-of-way permit for a POD requires the posting of a \$1,000 bond. The permit fee is \$115.50

Individuals considering installing a POD comprising a metal storage container should consult Chapter 59 of the Montgomery County Code to determine if a building permit is also required.

Questions concerning POD's may be directed to Permitting Services Specialist Danny Ratliff at 240 777-6302.



WELL-AND-SEPTIC UPDATE



Who's that very tall and handsome new inspector in the Well and Septic arena nowadays? Why, it's Jared Sluzalis that's who it is!

Many DPS'ers asked who he was when it was announced that Jared and his wife Angela became the proud parents of their first child, a bouncing baby girl, Paige Sluzalis, in April. Jared is an Environmental Health Specialist II and came to DPS from the Carroll County Health Department. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Geology and is a Registered Environmental Sanitarian.

Jared has an interesting story for you pro-football aficionados. No, he didn't try out for tight end for Yours Truly's beloved Redskins, though at 6' 5" and 240 pounds, he certainly could give it a shot. He is a die-hard Cleveland Browns fan. Although not a member of the fabled "Dawg Pound," the nutty group of Cleveland fans that wear dog masks, Jared is a season-ticket holder. He regularly travels to Cleveland home games and to an occasional away game (note—it's hot in Dallas!). Probably the highlight of Jared's "Cleveland career" was when ESPN, while doing a segment on the Dawg Pound, filmed Angela and him in a mock wedding (after their true wedding) for a Monday Night Football game. Needless to say, Jared has had some friendly "discussions" with the strong DPS Pittsburgh Steeler contingent led by, to name a few of the fanatics, Leo Galanko, Blair Lough, Leonard Woods and Nancy Villani.

WEB ENHANCEMENTS

The Department of Permitting Services (DPS) has recently launched 3 major enhancements to our website <http://permittingervices.montgomerycountymd.gov> to better serve residents of Montgomery County. These services include:

- **Spanish/English Translator**
- **Google Mini-Search Appliance**
- **Browse Aloud Speech-Enabled Plug-in**

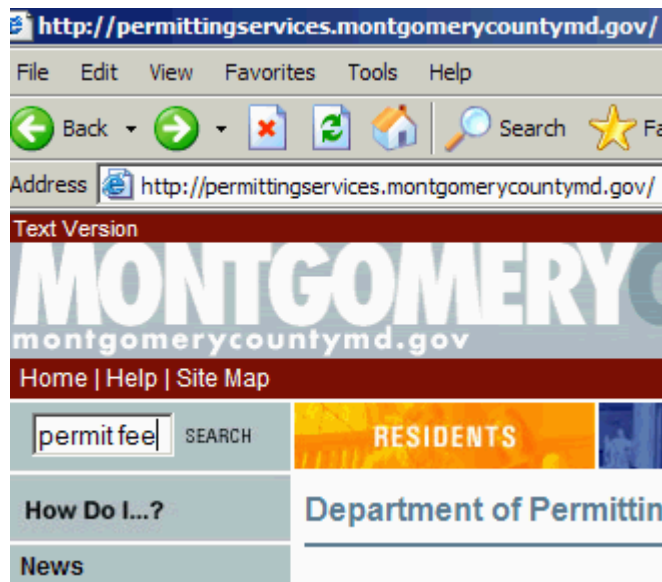
Please review the information below and try these new DPS website capabilities.

SPANISH/ENGLISH TRANSLATOR

This tool provides translation of the Montgomery County website into Spanish. To

start this service, click on the  icon that can be found on the left navigation bar. It will take you to the User Agreement page first. Then, click on the “Convengo/I Agree” button to see pages translated into Spanish.

To get to the DPS website from there, click on the “Departamentos” link from the left navigation bar, and then click on the “Servicios De Permiso.” Most of the information on the DPS website will be translated into Spanish except for the PDF file attachments.



GOOGLE WEB SEARCH APPLI- ANCE

Google is a widely known web search engine that will return more accurate and faster search results. To use it, type in a word or phrase to search for in the search field provided on the upper left corner of the website (below main banner) and then press the “Enter” key or click on the “SEARCH” link next to it.

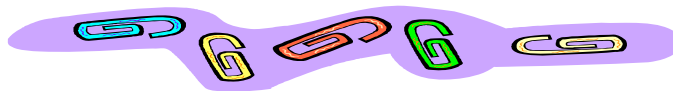
“BROWSE ALOUD” PLUG-IN

“Browse Aloud” is a service designed to provide speech-enabled content to users with:

- Low literacy and reading skills
- Dyslexic tendencies
- Limited English Proficiency (English is not the first language)
- Mild visual impairments

This software has to be downloaded and installed before it can be used. More information about Browse Aloud, in addition to a link to download this plug-in, can be found in the footer of each page, under the “Accessibility” link.

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Best viewed with IE 5.0 or Netscape 6.0 and higher



DPS-DOCR ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT-IMAGING PROJECT

Daily since 2001, DPS has been converting paper applications, permits, construction drawings, and related documents for several business processes into electronic format. This "day-forward" imaging process is performed by one full-time employee and four temporary clerical staff.

In addition to day-forward imaging, over one million paper, mylar, microfilm and microfiche documents were converted to electronic format during the permit-system-development project. DPS is also “indexing” these documents, i.e., inserting identifying information into a database (e.g., permit number, address, etc.) to allow rapid retrieval of stored electronic images by multiple attributes.

Staff from DPS and the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (“DOCR”) recently evaluated a program at the Liberty

Correctional Facility (“LCF”) in Tallahassee, Florida, where inmates perform many advanced information functions, including imaging, indexing and Geographic Imaging System support. Their work encompasses the totality of the document-management life cycle, including document preparation (identification, separation, unbinding, sorting, aggregation, counting, labeling, etc), scanning (8.5" x 11" through E-size construction drawings), indexing (including double-blind comparisons), and post-imaging document handling. The program was initiated and managed by Pride Enterprises, Inc. and provides enhanced job skills, heightened self-esteem, and income for inmates; accredited instruction; and significant reductions in document-imaging costs.

In FY ‘05, DPS and DOCR worked together to develop an electronic document-management program (“EDMP”) similar to the LCF program at the Montgomery County Correctional Facility (“MCCF”) in

Clarksburg. DOCR assigned a workforce leader and two correctional officers to the program to supervise the inmate workers and constructed a secure work area for the imaging operation. The DOCR staff were trained at DPS in the entire document-imaging process. DPS and DOCR installed four personal computers, four large-format document scanners, and four high-speed small-format scanners at the MCCF and connected the equipment through the County's data-communications network to the DPS permit system and document-imaging database. The installation included extending fiber-optic cabling to the document-imaging area from the MCCF network equipment to optimize the transfer of potentially large imaging files (some image files are several hundred megabytes). Staff from the Security Office of the Department of Technology Services provided assistance and guidance throughout the project, which ensured a safe and secure system configuration.

After establishing a secure communications and imaging infrastructure, DPS and DOCR put the EDMP into full day-forward operation at the MCCF on June 17, 2005. Paper documents are inventoried and prepared daily for imaging at DPS in Rockville and then delivered to MCCF each day. After imaging by the inmates and review by the correctional officers, all documents are returned to DPS for final quality-assurance review and disposition.

In the future, the EDMP will include imaging and indexing historical documents (to, hopefully, obviate filing cabinets!) and indexing previously-scanned electronic images.



DPS WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEES

Ah-Young Moon and Paul Stoner are the two most recent additions to the DPS complement.

Ah-Young joined DPS on June 27, 2005, as an IT Specialist II in the Director's Office under the supervision of automation manager Tom Laycock. She came to DPS from a similar position in the County Office of Management and Budget.

Ah-Young has over 10 years of experience in the analysis, development, administration, and enhancement of various computer systems and networks. She has an AA Degree in Information Systems from Montgomery College.

Paul became a DPS employee on May 31, 2005. He is a Permitting Services Inspector II in the Sediment/Stormwater Inspection Section of the Division of Land Development.

Paul has a Bachelor's Degree in Biology from Towson State University and over 30 years of experience in erosion and sediment control, most recently as a Division Chief with the Maryland Department of the Environment. He reports to Permitting Services Manager Mike Reahl.

Welcome to DPS, Ah-Young and Paul!

PROFICIENCY ADVANCEMENTS



Proficiency advancements are non-competitive promotions that recognize an employee's readiness to assume the duties of the mid-level or highest classification at which his or her position has been budgeted. Most proficiency advancements in DPS require completion of occupationally-specific certification requirements for promotion to the highest classification level.

We are pleased to announce that the following employee has been proficiency advanced within their respective positions: James Maxwell of the Division of Casework Management has been proficiency advanced to Permit Technician II, effective May 15, 2005. James has been with DPS since May of 2003 and reports to Permitting Services Manager Sandy Kaiser.

Please join us in congratulating James on his promotion.

ETHERIDGE FEATURED IN FREDERICK POST

(The article that follows below appeared in a recent edition of the Frederick Post. It is reproduced here with the permission of its author, Erin Cunningham.)

Mark Etheridge is a Permitting Services Specialist in the Stormwater Management and Sediment Control Plan Review Unit of the Division of Land Development. We always knew that Mark was a man of extraordinary capabilities, but we were unaware that his talents ran to artisanal suds production. Also, we didn't know how much we had in common with him avocationally, as Mr. Cunningham reports: "Most weekends, he and Mr. Sprott eat chips, drink beer and make beer." Drop the

"make beer," add "watch t.v.," & you have a pretty good description of how we spend the bulk of our leisure time.

By Erin Cunningham

News-Post Staff

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MYERSVILLE — Mark Etheridge brews beer in his Myersville garage and recently won second place in a regional brewer's competition with a red ale called "Myersville Red."

Mr. Etheridge and Michael Sprott began brewing beer together a few years ago. They are constantly experimenting with different types of beer and believe Myersville Red is the best brew they've made.

About seven years ago Mr. Etheridge took a beer brewing class at The Flying Barrel in Frederick.

"I tell you," he said. "I never knew there were so many types of beer. It's just Miller Light and Coors Light, right?"

When he started brewing he had minimal equipment — just a pot for the stove and a few buckets. Now, he has four huge coolers and a converted 15-gallon beer keg set up in his garage.

Most weekends, he and Mr. Sprott eat chips, drink beer and make beer. It typically takes one full day to brew 10 gallons of beer.

The brewers recently began making beer with no flavoring extracts.

"It's all grain," Mr. Etheridge said.

They once converted 30 pounds of grain into only five gallons of beer.

"That usually isn't drinkable for a year," he said. "It takes a while to age."

By placing in the regional contest with Myersville Red, they are now qualified to enter a larger competition expected to be held next year.

He said they aren't sure if they'll enter the red ale.

"We may enter three or four different styles next year," Mr. Etheridge said.

They also entered a light lager in The Great Frederick Fair last year and won third place.

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Senior Editor – William Boyajy
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BYE BYE

Senior Editor William Boyajy retired August 1, 2005. We will miss his editorial expertise.